ANNUAL REPORT

Diversifying discourse on China through professional development, community building, and advocacy

2022

BLACK CHINA CAUCUS ASSOCIATION
The Black China Caucus Association ("BCC") is a Washington DC-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, comprised of volunteers dedicated to advancing the voices of Black professionals who specialize on China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. This aim is accomplished by focusing on professional development, community building, and advocacy.
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About Us

Beginning in March 2020, Dr. Keisha Brown and Mark Akpaninyie, Co-Chief Executive Officers, noticed that discourse on China, across all sectors and disciplines, academia, policy, art, and tech, failed to include the participation of Black China professionals. In light of these issues, Dr. Brown and Mr. Akpaninyie joined together and jointly founded BCC with the aim to enhance and advance the voices of Black professionals who focus on China.

BCC began to work towards this mandate by building a publicly available centralized hub of Black China specialists. In doing so, members of the broader public can now access a searchable global database of Black professionals whose expertise covers critical, cutting-edge, and contemporary topics necessary to understanding China.

What began as an endeavor to survey Black experiences in the China space quickly blossomed into a full-fledged organization. BCC recruited Avonda Fogan, Chief Strategy Officer, and Mycal Ford, Chief Operating Officer, to join BCC’s leadership team, bringing along with them their diverse experience related to China and, more importantly, their acumen for nonprofit management and strategy. The leadership team of BCC has grown to eight total members who bring their individual China expertise and a wide variety of skills including social media management, editing, programmatic, and event planning skills.

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“The Black China Caucus community is more than a traditional professional network; it is a group of individuals rooting for you in a field that can be challenging to navigate. Whether it is providing guidance in one-on-one mentorship calls, organizing member events, promoting individuals' work in the field, or increasing access to professional development through sharing job opportunities, the support is felt in a variety of areas. I look forward to the day when I can do the same for incoming Black China Caucus members and give back to a community that believed in me before I knew what I could accomplish.”

**Amani Core**  
Schwarzman Scholar '23
Founding of BCC

BCC was founded in March 2020, amidst the resurgence of public attention on the Black Lives Matter Movement, by like-minded Black professionals passionate about rectifying underrepresentation in the China space.

October 2020

Building Partnerships

In late 2020, BCC established informal partnerships and relationships with key organizations in the China space, including NCUSCR, USCBC, Carnegie Corporation, Henry Luce Foundation, Schwarzman.

November 2021

Incorporation and Tax-Exempt Status is Assigned

In Fall 2021, BCC established itself as a corporation in Delaware and obtained federal and DC local tax-exempt status.

February 2021

BCC Goes Viral

In Spring 2021, China held its annual Spring New Year Gala in which Black Face was performed. BCC’s expertise on the topic led to immediate public attention in Reuters, WSJ, NYT.

March 2022

Grants Empower BCC Programs

BCC receives its first-ever grant from the Carnegie Corporation to launch key programming, including social networking events, PD workshops, and a mentorship program.

2023 and Beyond

Increased Capacity and Programs

As BCC embarks into the future, it is expanding its programming to support its mission, growing its team to support its members, and honing its internal capacity for long-term influence.
Executive Leadership

U. Mark Akpaninyie  
Co-CEO

Dr. Keisha Brown  
Co-CEO

Mycal L. Ford  
COO

Avonda Fogan  
CSO

Volunteer Staff

Titilayo Ogundele  
Communications Director

J. Kirt Smith  
Programming Director

Tarela Moses  
Program Quality Advisor

Cole Walker  
Outreach Coordinator

Natalia Simmons-Thomas  
Events Coordinator

Marques Kitchen  
Events Coordinator

Rachel Kirichu  
Program Support
Dear Supporters and Allies,

It has been a tremendous privilege to build up the BCC community and work together to enhance the presence and participation of Black professionals in the China space. While only three years have passed since we co-founded BCC, our community and our reach has grown dramatically. What started as a conversation between two friends has blossomed into a global community. We are truly inspired by the contributions, advocacy, and dedication of countless individuals that have made this effort possible.

As we embark on another year, we look towards the past and reflect on the significant milestones accomplished in pursuit of continued progress towards our common goal. The year 2022 was one of major growth and development of the organization. Through the leadership of Chief Strategy Officer Avonda Fogan, BCC officially registered as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization which enabled BCC to enter into generous partnerships with philanthropic donors to advance our mission. These partners and donors allowed us to devote dedicated resources towards building capacity and expanding support for the organization. Internally, we used the year to sharpen our focus and bolster our programming with our growing community.

BCC launched two signature programs, the mentoring program and ECOsystems Upskilling series, which fostered greater connectivity and engagement of the membership base. None of this work would have been possible without our amazing team. We want to give a heartfelt thank you to our leadership team members, Avonda Fogan and Mycal Ford. Their passion for our mission, ingenuity, and tireless efforts have enabled BCC to engage in strategic and long-term thinking. They have been essential in strengthening BCC’s organizational capabilities and we are incredibly thankful to have them as integral parts of the organizational leadership.

We are also thankful for the other members of our expanding team. We are truly grateful to Titi Ogundele, Natalia Simmons-Thomas, Kirt Smith, Marques Kitchen, Tarela Moses, Cole Walker, and others who have strengthened BCC this past year through the generosity of their time, ideas, and volunteering. The hard work and inspiration they provide have kept BCC going and we are proud of the efforts that keep BCC at the forefront of organizations committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the China space. We look forward to working together and seeing what we can accomplish as a growing team. Finally, thanks to you and your trust in our mission, BCC continues to grow and build greater momentum.

Through it all, we have never lost sight of our mission and what we are about—our growing community. As we look ahead, we are encouraged by this momentum and we look forward to working towards our shared mission for years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keisha Brown, Co-CEO, Co-Founder

Mark Akpaninyie, Co-CEO, Co-Founder
Financial Summary
Fiscal Year 2022

Revenue
$27,576
- $26,500 Foundation Grants
- $825 Individual Contributions
- $251 Other Contributions

Expenditures
$16,283
- $9,063 Personnel
- $3,301 Administration
- $2,918 Events
- $1,000 Programs

Assets
$11,293

Liabilities
$0
“It still amazes me that in my 12+ years in this field, I never knew so many other Black people were in the China and Taiwan specialist spaces. I have met many current and future specialists that will be decision-makers one day, and I have appreciated the perspectives that have enhanced or challenged my views on China and Taiwan.”

Shirley Martey Hargis
Nonresident Fellow
Atlantic Council’s Global China Hub and Digital Forensic Research Lab
Partnerships & Collaboration

BCC is appreciative of the enduring relationships it has built since its founding. These relationships not only strengthen the ability of BCC to accomplish its mission, but greatly expands BCC’s organizational reach and creates long-lasting allies in the effort to advance Black professionals in the China space. BCC has worked with the following organizations on a variety of programming, events, and projects:

“Since its inception in 2020, BCC members and the organization itself have grown to be recognized as leaders and change-makers in Washington, D.C. and beyond, a trend that will continue for years to come.”

Greyson Mann, Government Affairs Manager
The US-China Business Council
Our Impact

Besides building and sustaining an inclusive community of Black China specialists and creating programs to empower its membership, BCC hosted numerous internal and external, online and in-person, events in coordination with various established nonprofits, academic institutions, and organizations. Throughout 2022, BCC convened a diverse collective of members and experts who spoke on topics ranging from Africa’s relationship with China to the personal experiences of being a Black China scholar to networking happy hours.

Last year, BCC also launched ECOsystems, with the acronym “ECO” in ECOsystems referring to Exposure, Confidence, and Opportunity. The professional development event series is an ongoing program that offers professional development and upskilling opportunities to Black professionals designed to enhance their existing skill sets.
Our Impact

In 2021, BCC launched a pilot mentorship program designed to pair early and mid-career professionals within the BCC community with seasoned China policy professionals. Mentees were matched in a one-to-one pairing that lasted for a duration of one year. Due to the success of the pilot, in February 2022, BCC officially launched its professional mentorship program, which built upon the prior year’s pilot program by creating additional structure and forging more meaningful connections.

The inaugural cohort was comprised of 12 Black professionals and students from four countries (the United States, Ghana, Perú, and Rwanda) who participated from locations spanning three continents—North America, Africa, and Asia. Each member was matched with a mentor who had experience in a range of fields, including think tanks, academia, government, non-profit organizations, and corporations.

Nohelia Rivera Matias
Alumna of the Mentorship Program
In 2022, BCC expanded in its mission to increase the pipeline for Black China professionals by creating a resource geared towards students and early career professionals. China 101 was created as an intentional community designed for both undergraduate and graduate students who want to enhance their exposure to opportunities in the China field. This community welcomes students with little or no previous exposure to the China field as well as those with extensive experience.

During 2022, BCC contacted approximately 100 academic institutions nationally to build a relationship with their individual Chinese Studies departments. In its first iteration, BCC was able to develop a list of 50 active college students who wished to subscribe to BCC China 101 subscription service, which will enhance their exposure to opportunities in the China field.
“BCC fosters a community I always hoped to have since I started studying Mandarin and China-related issues. I was often the only Black individual in many of my classes, which led me to believe I was one of very few aspiring Black experts on China-related issues. Now, I am not only excited to see many others through BCC, but I am also exposed to different China-related fields in which many BCC colleagues work.”

Oyintarela Moses
Data Analyst and Database Manager
Global China Initiative at the Boston University Global Development Policy Center
As a growing voice for Black professionals in the China space, BCC is often called upon by media outlets to speak on important issues at the intersection of race and China studies or to provide commentary on current developments or flashpoints regarding China. BCC has captured the attention of news and media outlets, including the Washington Post, Reuters, POLITICO, Newsweek, South China Morning Post, and Vice News. In addition - our members, emerging voices in their own right - have appeared in media outlets, providing timely analysis on many cross-cutting issues involving China. Highlights from 2022 include the following.
BCC is incredibly grateful for the generous support it has received from individuals and foundations since its founding.

Through generous grants and donations, BCC is able to continue its vital work of promoting, developing, advancing, and enhancing the presence and participation of Black professionals who specialize on China. The past three years have afforded BCC much success due, in large part, to the immense support of our partner organizations, supporters, and friends.

None of the vital work of amplifying the voices of Black professionals or highlighting issues of underrepresentation and exclusion in the China space could have been possible without the generous support of the philanthropic foundation Carnegie Corporation of New York. BCC is extremely grateful for the generosity and support of Carnegie Corporation of New York in equipping BCC with the resources necessary that will enable us to diversify discourse on China.

BCC is also very appreciative to our supporters Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt and Brandon Raines. Stephanie and Brandon generously provided BCC leadership with executive coaching which enabled the organization to create an inclusive, trustworthy work environment, develop and refine our organizational objectives and goals, and build organizational resilience.

The growing partnerships and collaboration BCC has had with multiple outside organizations have been a source of growth and development for the mission. Over the year, we have partnered with diverse stakeholders such as the National Association of Black Engagement with Asia, the U.S.-China Business Council, the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, and Schwarzman Scholars which has enabled BCC to extend its reach and target new audiences.

With this support, BCC will continue growing its signature programs, internal and external events, and collaborative programming with organizations and professionals within the industry.
Looking Ahead

As BCC looks ahead to 2023 and beyond, BCC will continue growing and improving its signature programs and events and seek collaborative opportunities with organizations and professionals within the industry. We are also excited to launch several new initiatives in the new year, including:

- Closed door dinner series where BCC members can network, learn from, and engage with senior China policy professionals and thought leaders!

- A grant contest that enables a young professional to explore any topic related to China through art!

- Additional ECOsystems sessions whereby BCC will offer professional development and upskilling opportunities to members designed to enhance their qualifications, such as media training, op-ed writing, public speaking, and more!

- Mandarin language learning and training opportunities to enable BCC members to sharpen their skills and build on previous language exposure or existing fluency!

- The second iteration of BCC signature professional mentorship program that pairs early and mid-career professionals within the BCC community with seasoned China policy professionals!

- The official launch of China 101, BCC’s community designed for both undergraduate and graduate students who want to enhance their exposure to opportunities in the China field!